11-5-68

AIRTEL AM

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)

FROM: SAC, MEMPHIS (44-1987) P

MURKIN

Enclosed to Bureau are four copies of LHM regarding information furnished by one BILL SARTOR to Departmental Attorney J. HAROLD FLANNERY regarding a possible conspiracy in instant case.

3 BUREAU (Enc. 4)(AM)
1 MEMPHIS

JCH:BN
(4)

44-1987-Sub-E-1090

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to File No.

Memphis, Tennessee
November 5, 1968

RE: JAMES EARL RAY, Aka.;
Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, VICTIM
CIVIL RIGHTS - CONSPIRACY

Mr. J. Harold Flannery of the United States Department of Justice, has prepared a memorandum dated September 17, 1968, reflecting interviews on June 12, 1968, and August 22, 1968, with Mr. Bill Sartor of Greenville, Mississippi, a contract writer for "Time" magazine.

Sartor states that "Charlie Stein, a petty rackateer connected with organized crime, contacted James Earl Ray in Los Angeles and told him that there were people in New Orleans whom he ought to talk to." Sartor states he does not know whether Stein's initial contact with Ray was accidental or on purpose, but he states that "Ray was told that the people he ought to talk to would help him with money and his fugitive status." Stein's account of his involvement in this matter as well as other investigation relative to Stein is set forth in reports furnished to the Department of Justice.

Sartor tells us that Ray was in touch in New Orleans with "Mafia" representatives who referred Ray to Frank Liberto, described by Sartor as being a Memphis racketeer and a lieutenant of Carlos Marcellos, the southern Mafia chieftain in New Orleans. Sartor then related to Mr. Flannery that one John McFerren of Somerville, Tennessee, on or about the day of King's murder, heard a man say on the telephone "shoot him on the balcony, shoot him anywhere; and go to New Orleans for your money, don't come back here." Information concerning this reported incident has also been furnished to the Department of Justice.

Claude Cockrell, described by Sartor as a segregationist, extortionist, narcotics pusher, and petty racketeer, was an unsuccessful candidate for election to the U. S. House of Representatives in the election of November 5, 1968. Inquiries concerning Cockrell made among knowledgeable members of the Memphis Police Department reflect that he has been suspected of complicity in a moonshine whiskey operation and has a questionable reputation among police officers.

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Joe Cacameci and Larry Mann, identified by Sartor as professional killers, are unknown to this office. No information to date has connected these individuals with the murder of Dr. King.

According to Sartor, a young Negro boy allegedly heard a shot and saw a man jump up from the bushes behind the rooming house and below the window area from which the fatal shot is thought to have been fired. A thorough investigation was conducted in the neighborhood of this rooming house immediately after the murder and during the days immediately following the murder and no information was developed to indicate that any unidentified person was seen beneath the window from which Ray fired the fatal shot.

All of the individuals, both firemen and policemen, who were stationed in the fire house near the Lorraine Motel have been interviewed regarding the events before and after the murder, and these results have also been furnished to the Department of Justice.

Due to the tense racial situation that existed in Memphis on April 4, 1968, and because of the prominence of Dr. King, the Memphis Police Department had every reason to be in touch with persons at the Lorraine Motel in connection with the protection of Dr. King. There were police officers in and around the Lorraine Motel throughout the period that Dr. King was residing there.

Investigation is continuing relative to individual mentioned in Sartor's information.

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